

My name is Erica Linhorst. I have been married for 17 years to my husband who is a 15 year veteran of the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department. As a mother of 6 children, a black woman who was born and raised in North St. Louis, I would like to share with you my feelings about my friend Dustin

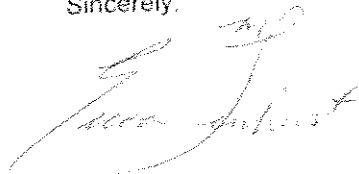
I met Dustin and his wife Ashley through my husband. My husband does not hang out with a lot of policemen so when he does introduce me to a police officer I know he thinks very highly of them. Dustin, Ashley, and I quickly became family.

Having a very large family, money is always tight. I can't tell you how many times Dustin has sent us clothes, toys, electronics, etc. that we never would have been able to afford. He never made it feel like charity and the kids were always so excited.

I am a very protective mother, and my kids rarely get to spend the night except for rare occasions. Dustin and Ashley are the only people other than my parents and siblings who I have trusted to let my daughter spend the night with. My 8 year old daughter, Avi, is best friends with Dustin's daughter. To me that says all you need to know about Dustin: I trust him with the safety of what is most precious in this world to me.

I know Dustin had texts in his phone used language that some people want to use to label him as a racist. Being considered family, I sat in on the trial and I know Dustin is ashamed of some of the things he said in the text messages. And I know Dustin has grown so much through the whole process. I know that Dustin loves me, my husband, and my kids as family. No texts using racist words changes that. Dustin knows he made a mistake. But that mistake doesn't change the man I know who deeply loves his family, wife, and friends. I ask that your Honor would please show mercy on a dear friend, that has been a true blessing to me and my family.

Sincerely,



Erica Linhorst
10 Jason Drive, Glen Carbon IL 62034
314-882-3181

